

Group honors fund-raisers

Foundation assists young cancer patients

BY KAREN A. DIAZ
STAFF WRITER

The Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation raised \$2,500 at its first awareness and fund-raising event at Virginia Shuman Young Elementary School in Fort Lauderdale. All proceeds will go toward underprivileged children with cancer.

On Oct. 22, Principal **Mark Strauss** and media specialist **Anne Talmont** were given plaques for their commitment in coordinating the event to promote cancer awareness among students.

"It is important for children to understand what cancer is, how it is treated, and also to know that people do survive. Children need to know that cancer isn't a synonym for death," Talmont said.

A plaque also was given to event sponsor Joe Picasso's in



HAPPY MEMORY: After her daughter Jessica June Eiler died of complications from leukemia, Sandra Muvdi founded the Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation. **Photo courtesy of Sandra Muvdi**

Fort Lauderdale, which sells T-shirts and buttons for the foundation.

Sandra Muvdi of Fort Lauderdale founded the organization after her only child, **Jessica June Eiler**, 7, died of leukemia on Oct. 9, 2003.

"Everything went great. This was very special because this was my daughter's school. All the kids that knew her came up to me. It was a touching and meaningful event," Muvdi said. She chose October as her foundation's Cancer Awareness

Month because it is the anniversary month of her daughter's death.

Jessica came home from school one day with what seemed like a cold. A week later she was diagnosed with leukemia and suffered a hemorrhage that same evening. She was in a coma for four days before she died.

After Jessica's death, Muvdi joined family members living in Colombia and grieved for her daughter. A few months later she decided to turn her loss into another child's gain and started the foundation.

"Maybe this was all part of God's plan, and now after hearing my calling, I have so much to accomplish in your memory, in your absence," Muvdi said. "I miss you my angel and want to do anything to make you happy."

For volunteer and donation information, call 954-593-5603 or go to www.jjccf.org.

Karen A. Diaz can be reached at kdiaz@sun-sentinel.com or 954-356-4505.